

## ALPHABETICS ASSESSMENTS

Aimed at assessing what the National Reading Panel (2000) referred to as "Alphabetics," the following pages provide subtests for assessing phonemic awareness, alphabet knowledge, and phonics. Assessment protocols are described before each subtest series.

### Phonemic Awareness Tests (PATs)

#### *Initial Consonant Sounds Test (ICST): An Oddity Task*

**Purpose.** The Initial Consonant Sounds Test (ICST) measures whether children have developed the awareness of beginning sounds in spoken words. Sometimes referred to in reading research as an "oddity task," this type of test requires that students identify the "odd word out" or, more specifically, the odd beginning sound from a list of spoken words. (Note: The beginning consonant sound in a one-syllable word is also known as the *onset*, and the remainder of the word as the *rime*.)

**Research.** This subtest was developed, field tested, and examined for concurrent validity as part of a comprehensive study at Vanderbilt University (Williams, 2003).

#### *Procedure.*

1. Seat the child across from you at a table.
2. Say, "We are going to play a word game. First, I will show you how this game is played. I am going to say three words slowly. Then, I will figure out which word has a different sound at the beginning."
3. Next, say the words "PAN, PIG, KITE" slowly, emphasizing the beginning sound of each word just a little more than other sounds in the word. Say, "I will say the words one more time to see if I can tell which word has a different sound at the beginning—PAN, PIG, KITE."
4. Say, "The words PAN and PIG sound the same at the beginning, but KITE has a different beginning sound."
5. Say, "Let me do one more for you—COAT, BUS, BALL. Did you notice that COAT has a different sound at the beginning than BUS and BALL? Now you try it."
6. Ask the child now to decide which word is the odd word out. Say, "RUN, ROPE, CALL. Which word has a different sound at the beginning?" If the child has difficulty, you may repeat the words.
7. If the student gives the correct answer, proceed to the Initial Consonant Sounds Test (ICST): Form A. Forms B and C are equivalent forms of the ICST, and may be used for further testing, or for progress monitoring if instruction in phonemic awareness is needed.

NOTE: *You may say each row of words twice for the student.*

**Determining the Student's Developmental Level.** Developmental levels are an indication of the student's ability of a given skill. **Proficient** means that the student has attained relative mastery of the skill and does not require further instruction. **Apprentice** means that the student has some ability with the skill, but needs further instruction. **Novice** essentially means that the student has little or no knowledge of the skill and requires instruction.

DEVELOPMENTAL LEVEL	ITEMS CORRECT
Proficient	8-10
Apprentice	4-7
Novice	0-3

## **Initial Consonants Sounds Test (ICST)**

### **Form A**

<b>Soap</b>	<b>Six</b>	<b>Dog</b>
<b>Car</b>	<b>Man</b>	<b>Mop</b>
<b>Duck</b>	<b>Dog</b>	<b>Five</b>
<b>Pig</b>	<b>Pack</b>	<b>Fan</b>
<b>Fish</b>	<b>Leaf</b>	<b>Fig</b>
<b>Wheel</b>	<b>Nest</b>	<b>Nut</b>
<b>Cat</b>	<b>Nine</b>	<b>Cake</b>
<b>Sun</b>	<b>Tree</b>	<b>Tie</b>
<b>Bee</b>	<b>Bat</b>	<b>Clock</b>
<b>Sock</b>	<b>Fish</b>	<b>Feet</b>

### *Phonemic Segmentation Test (PST)*

**Purpose.** A child's ability to isolate individual sounds in spoken words, or *phonemes*, is an early indication as to whether he or she is ready for phonics instruction. In this subtest, students are asked to listen to spoken words pronounced by the examiner, and then isolate sounds in the initial, medial, and final positions in each word.

**Research.** This subtest was developed, field tested, and examined for concurrent validity as a part of a comprehensive study at Vanderbilt University (Williams, 2003).

**Procedures.** Begin by modeling for the student how phonemes heard in spoken words can be pronounced individually. Demonstrate using the "word rubber-banding" technique (i.e., hearing and saying each phoneme in a spoken word by stretching the word out slowly like a rubber band) and how you can hear the beginning or initial sound in words.

*Say:* "Listen to how I can stretch a word like a rubber band and hear each sound in the word."

Using the words "look" and then "top," demonstrate word rubber-banding.

*Say:* "Lllllllllloooooooooookkkkkkk. When I say it that way and listen to the sound at the beginning of the word, I can hear the /l/ sound. Lllllllllloooooooooookkk. Could you hear /l/ when I said 'top' that way?"

Repeat this modeling exercise using the word "look" and the student's own first or last name. Still another variation involves drawing out a sound or exaggerating the sound; for example, "MMMMMaaaaarrrryyy had a little llllllaaaammmm" (Reutzel & Cooter, 2011a).

Next, let the child practice the word rubber-banding technique with the words we supply for this purpose, or choose some of your own. Make sure practice words you select have no more than three sounds or phonemes.

Next, explain to the child that you are going to play a quick game together. You will say a word, and then you will ask the child to tell you the sound he or she hears in a specific place in the word, such as beginning, middle, or end. For example, you may say, "slam." You would then say, "Say the sound at the end of the word 'slam.'" The child should respond correctly by articulating the sound /m/.

Now you may begin the **Phonemic Segmentation Test (PST)** with Form A. Forms B and C may be used, if needed, at other times in the school year to check for progress on phonemic segmentation learning as a result of your teaching. Record each response on the protocol form (these may be duplicated as much as you like for your classroom assessments).

**Determining the Student's Developmental Level.** Developmental levels are an indication of the student's ability of a given skill. **Proficient** means that the student has attained relative mastery of the skill and does not require further instruction. **Apprentice** means that the student has some ability with the skill, but needs further instruction. **Novice** essentially means that the student has little or no knowledge of the skill and requires instruction.

On the PST, you can determine the student's developmental level by adding up the total number correct out of the 15 items from Parts 1-3 on Forms A, B, and C, then comparing the number correct to the following table.

DEVELOPMENTAL LEVEL	ITEMS CORRECT
Proficient	13-15
Apprentice	9-12
Novice	0-8

# Phonemic Segmentation Test (PST)

## Form A

### Part 1. Beginning (Initial) Sounds in Spoken Words

**Examiner says:** "Please tell me the sound you hear at the beginning of each word as I say it. For example, if I say the word 'sit' you would say /s/. Do you have any questions?"

**Note:** If the child does not seem to understand, offer two or three other examples. After you pronounce each of the five target words below, note the student's response next to it on your protocol form in the space provided.

#### Target Words and Phonemes

#### Student Responses

live /l/

big /b/

sat /s/

men /m/

not /n/

Score: \_\_\_\_/5 words

### Part 2. Medial (Middle) Sounds in Spoken Words

**Examiner says:** "Now we are going to change our game just a little. Please tell me the sound you hear in the middle of each word as I say it. For example, if I say the word 'not' you would say /ɒ/. Do you have any questions?"

**Note:** If the child does not seem to understand, offer two or three other examples. After you pronounce each of the five target words below, note the student's response next to it on your protocol form in the space provided.

#### Target Words and Phonemes

#### Student Responses

phone /ə/

rat /æ/

did /ɪ/

fine /i/

these /ē/

Score: \_\_\_\_/5 words

(continued)

# Phonemic Segmentation Test (PST)

## Form A

### Part 3. Final (Ending) Sounds in Spoken Words

**Examiner says:** "Now we will change the game just one more time. Please tell me the sound you hear at the end of each word as I say it. For example, if I say the word 'hot' you would say /t/. Do you have any questions?"

**Note:** If the child does not seem to understand, offer two or three other examples. After you pronounce each of the five target words below, note the student's response next to it on your protocol form in the space provided.

Target Words and Phonemes

Student Responses

back /k/

say /ā/

not /t/

bun /n/

call //

Score: \_\_\_\_/5 words

Form A Total Score (Part 1 + Part 2 + Part 3) = \_\_\_\_/15 words

### *Blending Sounds Test (BST)*

*Purpose.* In the **Blending Sounds Test (BST)** students are asked to pronounce words by blending the spoken sounds of individual words stretched out verbally into *segmented* units (i.e., sh-ip or f-a-n). We call this "word rubber-banding." According to Griffith and Olson (1992), the ability to blend and pronounce a word from its segmented form demonstrates a slightly higher level of phonemic awareness than, say, recognizing rhyming sounds.

*Research.* This subtest was developed, field tested, and examined for concurrent validity as part of a comprehensive study at Vanderbilt University (Williams, 2003).

*Procedure.*

*Determining the Student's Developmental Level.* Developmental levels are an indication of the student's ability of a given skill. **Proficient** means that the student has attained relative mastery of the skill and does not require further instruction. **Apprentice** means that the student has some ability with the skill, but needs further instruction. **Novice** essentially means that the student has little or no knowledge of the skill and requires instruction.

For the BST, we have established the following developmental criteria base on the research by Yopp (1988).

<u>DEVELOPMENTAL LEVEL</u>	<u>ITEMS CORRECT</u>
Proficient	20-30
Apprentice	16-19
Novice	0-15

# Blending Sounds Test (BST)

## Part B: Blending Individual Sounds

### Procedures

1. Explain to the student that you will be stretching words out like a rubber band and saying each sound.
2. Model the following stretched words for the child as well as pronouncing them as whole, blended words.

#### Segmented Word/Sounds

S-i-t

F-a-n

T-o-p

#### Blended Word (Examiner Pronounces)

Sit

Fan

Top

3. Next, as a practice for the student to check for understanding, stretch the following words and ask the child to tell you the word. Before you say each segmented word in rubber-banding style, you may ask (optional) "What am I saying?"

#### Segmented Word/Sounds

M-a-n

C-a-p

#### Blended Word (Student Pronounces)

Man

Cap

4. Now you may begin administering Form B. Note each correct response with a checkmark (✓). Total the number of correct responses to determine whether the mastery level (20+ correct responses) has been achieved.

# Blending Sounds Test (BST)

## Part B: Protocol Blending Individual Sounds

Segmented Word/Sounds	Blended Word	Correct Response? (✓)
S - i - t	Sit	
F - a - t	Fat	
F - i - n	Fin	
L - i - t	Lit	
B - ē - t	Beet	
H - a - s	Has	
S - ē	See	
G - o - t	Got	
S - e - t	Set	
S - ō	So	
L - a - p	Lap	
T - i - p	Tip	

(continued)



## Blending Sounds Test (BST)

### Part B: Protocol Blending Individual Sounds (Continued)

Segmented Word/Sounds	Blended Word	Correct Response? (✓)
M - a - n	Man	
St - ā - te	State	
B - o - x	Box	
Sl - a - b	Slab	
R - u(ə) - g	Rug	
M - i - ce (ss)	Mice	
Sh - ē - t	Sheet	
F - r - o - g	Frog	
J - u - m - p	Jump	
T - ur - k - ē	Turkey	
M - ī - n - d	Mind	
W - ĭ - g	Wig	

(continued)

## Blending Sounds Test (BST)

### Part B: Protocol Blending Individual Sounds (Continued)

Segmented Word/Sounds	Blended Word	Correct Response? (✓)
L - o - ck	Lock	
St - ě - m	Stem	
B - ě - k	Beak	
H - ī - de	Hide	
C - ă - sh	Cash	
D - ī - m	Dime	

Total correct \_\_\_\_\_